[Sousa, John Philip]

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# "TALLY-HO!"

A Musical Drama,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY

JOAQUIN MILLER,

AUTHOR OF

"THE DANITES," "'49," "THE SILENT MAN," ETC., ETC.

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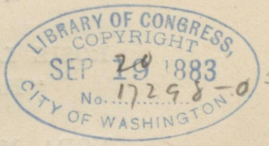


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# CAST OF CHARACTERS.

HANK MONK—
The famous stage-driver; "always on time."

EBENEZER OFFENHOFFER—
An honest but not very brilliant young man from the Alps.

TOM CRABTREE—
The genteel gambler. "Gentlemen, I always have four hands: my right hand, my left hand, the hand that has been dealt to me, and the hand up my sleeve; I never lose a game."

SAILOR BILL—
An old salt with "foul weather round the Horn."

SQUIRE BROWN—
"This must be looked into, as the man said when he fell in the well; and, gentlemen, the law is—well, the law is law!"

ROSIE LANE—
"The Rose of the Sierras."

NORA MALONE—
A guileless emigrant.

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# TALLY-HO!

## ACT I.

SCENE: *The Sierras; snow peaks, flat. Climbing stage-road through pines and over precipices. Mining camp. A surface mine in force. Practical derrick for hoisting and swinging rocks, fallen trees for seats, a stump for a table, picks, shovels, etc. Bags to represent gray and white quartz to be hoisted by derrick. Discovered* TOM CRABTREE *and* PILOT BILL—BILL *smoking a pipe.*

CRABTREE. Bah! That rank pipe of yours makes me feel ill.

BILL. Can't be helped. (*Smokes more.*)

CRABTREE. I wonder you can stand it. I can't.

BILL. Stand something better then, I won't quarrel with you for it.

CRABTREE. There, take this cigar. (*Business of selecting a doubtful one.*)

BILL. All right! But I'll bet it's the poorest in the hull collection.

CRABTREE. The idea of an ignorant Yankee sailor and stage-driver getting hold of a bit of property like this! Well, they say a "fool or a foreigner for luck."

BILL. He's a powerful heap luckier in his wife than he is in his mine, to my thinkin'. Nothin' in these stones.

CRABTREE. (*Aside.*) No, nothing but gold. Yes, that's a stroke of fortune for him, and of misfortune for me. Who'd ever have thought the Rose of the Sierras would have taken that dusty, drunken stage-driver in preference to a gen-

tleman. (*Aside.*) Crabtree, old boy, you've held hard cards of late, and must now play a desperate hand. Lose all, or win all. That has been the motto of Thomas Crabtree, Esq., and in the end he has always won the game.

BILL. 'Tain't nothin' to grumble at. What's the advantage of this old heap of rocks here anyhow? Why, you make as much fuss as if you war in foul weather round the Horn.

CRABTREE. Well, here's a horn for you. Take it. Take it, I say, and stop your mouth with it. (BILL *hesitates, then takes flask and drinks deeply. Wipes off mouth and neck of flask with sleeve and offers to* CRABTREE, *who refuses contemptuously.* BILL *drinks again eagerly.*)

BILL. (*Aside.*) Somethin' dirty to be done, or he wouldn't give me this. Foul weather round the Horn for Crabtree.

CRABTREE. (*Meantime has excitedly picked up a bit of quartz, looked at it and looked about suspiciously.*) Gold! gold! And that long, gawky Swiss that sings and always is looking up at the mountains, and talking of his home, has stumbled on to it here in Hank Monk's claim and don't know it. The fool wouldn't know gold if he saw it. I'll fix him. (*To* BILL). Of course there is nothing in these rocks. But I don't want Hank Monk here. I hate him! He got my girl, the brute! and now I want him to go—to leave the camp.

BILL. Buy him out. He don't want it.

CRABTREE. Don't he? That's all you know. I've offered him twice what he gave for it, but the fool says it's for his Rosie, and he won't take a million dollars for it, even if it was put down in gold eagles right at his feet. He talks about intending to rest here on the slope of the Sierras after all his voyages, with the pretty young wife, and to have her here at the mine, in a miner's cabin, waiting for him every night when he comes dashing down the hills on his Tally-ho.

BILL. He's crazy. Like all us old sailors, I'm afraid he drinks. (*Steals out flask and drinks again.*) Beastly thing to drink.

CRABTREE. By the way, Bill, if that stage should strike a stone, a stone not bigger than that (*picks up rock*), as it comes whirling down around that peak, why, driver, horses, Tally-ho and all would—

BILL. And pretty wife too, pard. He takes Rosie with him sometimes, you know.

CRABTREE. (*Wild and wicked.*) The time that the stage-wheel will strike the stone which you place there, she will not be with him.

BILL. (*Springs up, staggers—indignant.*) They call you the gentleman of this camp, Tom Crabtree. I'm drunk, drunk in my legs, but I ain't drunk here (*taps head*), and I ain't drunk here (*taps heart*). No, not drunk enough for that. Take 'em, take 'em. (*Throws down flask and cigar.*) And if ever you dare try that on old Hank Monk and his Tally-ho, I'll blow on you ! blow on you, blast you ! and it will be rough weather round Cape Horn for Tom Crabtree ! (*Exit.*)

CRABTREE. (*Looking after.*) The fool ! But I said nothing. I scarcely thought it. I did not dare think it. It is too dastardly, too cowardly to let come into my head. And yet he tempted me to half hope it. Why, to see Hank Monk whirl his Tally-ho, the first that ever crossed the Sierras, around them peaks yonder, playing spider and fly in the heaven with his six horses, it would seem that he must fall, and he must, he must and will. (*Song of the Alps in distance.*) That crazy Dutchman that he picked up and put to work here. Well, if I can't get both out of the way, and have wife and mine too, then I no longer hold four full hands.

[*Enter* EBENEZER *swinging demijohn of whiskey and tools. Throws down tools. Then hides jug in heap of leaves by tree.*]

EBE. Dat's for Hank Monk ven he come in on der Tally-ho. (*Looks about.*) And my Nora not here. Maybe she not hear me. I sing some more. (*Sings Eodee.*)

CRABTREE. And that's the way he digs for gold. It will not be hard to get rid of him. And whatever happens I sit here till I get a deed of this gold mine. (*Sits. Looks at rocks.*) Hank Monk, Tally-ho, and wife will all be here, and I'll get my deed by fair means or by foul.

EBE. I'll sing 'em so hard and so long dat she hear me for all de clangin' of de dishes down dere at de borden-house ; den she come. She promise to come and to help me hoist

dose rocks, my pretty French Nora. Maybe she come wid her sleeves rolled up, and her skirts tucked higher, and her hair, her pretty hair—her hair ! Well, de sunshine got tangled in her hair one afternoon, and it never could get out any more. (*Sings.*)

CRABTREE. Hello ! Eh ! that's the way you mine ?

EBE. (*Aside.*) Dunder ! Dat's de reason she not come. He been a roostin' round here on de mine.

CRABTREE. (*Rising and approaching.*) I say, is that the way you mine ?

EBE. Will you jest mine your own beezness ?

CRABTREE. (*Laughing.*) Well, you're a punster and don't know it. But I guess you'll make as much money singing as you will mining in that place.

EBE. Vell, now, don't you know dat's my opinion too ? Vy, Mister Crabtree, I not find one twenty-dollar piece since I dig und split und blow all dese rocks.

CRABTREE. (*Aside.*) Well, he's a fool. Not one twenty-dollar piece ?

EBE. No, not one ten-dollar piece, not one five, no, not one two-dollar-half piece. And I split 'em rocks and I blow 'em and I cuss 'em too. (*Fastening rope of derrick to rock, looks off.*) Yes, de boys is dere a-waitin' to swing 'em off. Hist away ! (*Derrick hoists rock and swings around, drops rock and returns.*)

CRABTREE. And you have not found even one little two-dollar-and-a-half gold piece ?

EBE. (*Wrestling and groaning with heavy rock as he fastens rope.*) No, not von ! And such heavy rocks ! If Hank Monk must be a fool, why can't he make me do some nice light rocks ? But no, he come to me one day when I rub down his horses. Ah ! he love dem horses so and der Tally-ho, he love dem so I never tink he marry. But he marry. (*Aside.*) And I too love dem horse, Bonaparte, Bounce, Highhead, Stepper, Jim, and Jerusalem Sam ! Yes, an' I will too get married, if Nora come. (*Looks about.*) If I get rid of him she come.

CRABTREE. (*Sits.*) And so you had rather rub down the horses than dig here ?

EBE. Rather ? Would a girl eat ice cream ? Ah ! why

when he came to me and he say, "Ebenezer"—for my name is Ebenezer Offenhoffer. They calls me Ebe for short ; dat's because I am so long. Well, he say, "Come, come up de mountain to de mines, for last night my Tally-ho she grind on de rock and make a shining spot like a twenty-dollar piece. Come," he say, "it is gold ! Come and open your hands to work and shut up your mouth to talk. And you tell noting and you know noting," und dat's all. Hist avay ! (*Derrick swings off another rock.*)

CRABTREE. And so he sets you here to work his claim, marries the Rose of the Sierras, takes her over the mountains in his Tally-ho and lets you suffer. Why don't you leave it, leave him, and let somebody jump the thing ?

EBE. Mister Crabtree, do you knows vat you got in your face ? Vell, you got vat I find in dese rocks—brass ; brass makes 'em tough and hard to split. Brass, dat's vat you got. Hist avay ! (*Another rock.*) Un don't you vant to go ? Brass !

CRABTREE. (*Aside.*) Brass ! It's gold ! Well, I don't move from this spot till this mine is mine. And with such a mine *she* shall be mine ! I sit here till my friends, Hank Monk and his wife, arrive. They are old friends of mine, and I want to see them. And don't you dare order me away. I have come to stay. (*Sits heavily.*)

EBE. Vell, I jest bet you don't stay some—very long time—much.

CRABTREE. You want me to go, do you ? (*Takes out knife.*) Well, how are you going about it ?

EBE. Oh, don't cut up my feelings so. I am so lonely here. I—I am so glad to have you come here and stay. Hank Monk he like you so, and Mrs. Hank Monk she like you so, and I like you so. You have such nice soft clothes, Mr. Crabtree. Your clothes dey fit you so nice, Mr. Crabtree. You are so small-waisted too, Mr. Crabtree. Hist avay ! (*Has fastened derrick rope in hook behind, and* CRABTREE, *brandishing bowie-knife and trying to get at and strike* EBE, *is slowly hoisted and swung around off stage.*) Hist avay ! How I will go about it ? Dat's de vay I go about it. Must you go, Mr. Crabtree ? Sorry you can't stay. Good-pye, ta ! ta ! ta ! ta ! (*Enter* NORA ; *turns, meets her.*) Nora ! (*Catches in*

*arms, kisses her.*) Nora, do you know it is because France is so close to Switzerland I love you so. Yes, Nora Malone, my country is as close to yours as I am to you. And that is saying it is pretty close, Nora. (*Hugs her, and she tears away.*)

NORA. Frinch? Frinch? Frinch am I? I'll tache ye somethin'. Sing "Wearin' of the Grane."

EBE. Der grane? Der grane?

NORA. Yes! Ye shall sing it and ye shall wear it, or I'll know the raison.

[EBE *from being in exalted spirits gradually breaks down before her, and she makes an Irishman of her Dutchman. Business ad lib. here as long as it takes.*]

EBE. Oh, dat's all right.

NORA. Is it? Is it? Well, ef it arn't we'll make it roit. Sing!

[*He tries to sing "Wearing of the Green."*]

EBE. Oh, dat's all right.

NORA. You're improvin'. Now, then, put your *dhudeen* in your *caubeen.*

EBE. Dat's all right.

NORA. Do as I tell you, sor. Put your *dhudeen* in your *caubeen,* or I'll know the raison why. (EBE *puts pipe in hat, Irish fashion.*)

EBE. Oh, dat's all right.

NORA. Now, sor, dance the jig I taught ya.

EBE. I? Nein! Nein!

NORA. Nine? I'll bet ye ten ye will!

EBE. But I am so dired out, Nora; dat vork.

NORA. Are ye going to dance or are ye not? (EBE *succumbs. They dance double jig.* NORA *howling at the end,* EBE *clumsily imitating her.*) Harroo for ould Oirland! Mind ye now!

EBE. (*Feebly.*) Hurroo for ould Oirland! (*Aside.*) Dam ould Oirland! (*Sound of bugle horn.* EBE *springs up.*) Tally-ho? Now I's—I's myself once more. Now you just better mind, Nora. He's come. He trows dem reins to de udder feller what rubs down de horses, and here dey come so happy. Ah, Nora, dat's de way we will be some day.

[*Enter* HANK *and* ROSIE ; *whips, gauntlets, rich and picturesque California driving habits.* EBE *and* NORA *courtesy and show great deference ; then* EBE *swings hat and shouts out his welcome and delight.*—NOTE. *I desire an exact make up of* HANK MONK *as he appeared in his prime, about* 15 *years ago. Stage dresses of that day worn : A broad-brimmed hat, stiff brim, and high-peaked crown, rich top-boots, long gauntlets, much jewelry, bowie-knife and pistol, very rich clothes and always a rich scarf of fine showy color about the neck. Their dresses were always as gorgeous as good taste would permit.*]

HANK. And here is faithful Ebe to welcome you with all the heartiness of a hundred tenantry. (*Shakes hands with* EBE.) Give him your hand, dear, for if we never find any one more false than he, we shall have the smoothest stage-drive over the hills of life that ever fell to the lot of a happy man. (*They shake hands and she talks to* EBE.) And Nora here too. (*Shakes hand.*) Well, Nora, when we get a house built and all the horses shedded right alongside, where they can look in at the windows, and I can talk to them and recount with them the stormy journeys we have had across the Sierras, and we are all together—you, Ebe, and she there, God bless her sweet face !—all to welcome me as I come dashing down here— (*Meantime* EBE *has dug up the jug slyly, and stands slyly offering it to* HANK. *Business of trying to conceal it from* ROSIE. *Enter* SQUIRE BROWN.) oh, that will be a happy day, Nora. And Squire Brown, too ! (*Shakes hands cordially.*)

BROWN. Yes, Mr. Crabtree said you had offered to sell your claim here, this ere played out lot of rocks ; seemed you didn't care much for it, and he wanted it for a sort of sheep ranch for goats.

EBE. Well, I'm sorry for dem sheep or goats vat gets dis dam place.

HANK. Sell my claim ? Well, I didn't know I was drinking that much. You remember, Squire ? You know a man will say things at such times. Had just got in, you know, was going to be married, felt so happy, and as he

wanted the place, and as it just then seemed to me that I owned and was about to possess all that this world possesses worth having, that little woman there, the Tally-ho and six noble horses, why maybe I did make some sort of promise. But never mind, nothing is signed yet.

BROWN. Right and safe till signed and delivered ; that is, that is the law. And the law in California is—is, well, the law in California is—is the law.

EBE. Is dat so ? De law in California is—is—is der law. Vell, I wish it was all signed, and I was took back to tend dem stage horses. But here— (*Adroitly gets jug to* HANK. *He whisks it up over wrist, California fashion, and drinks long and heavily. Hands back jug, and* EBE *does business ad lib. in getting jug from* HANK *and concealing it from* ROSIE. HANK *begins to show effects of liquor.*)

HANK. But, Squire, beg your pardon. That jug, Ebe.

BROWN. No, no ; not for the world. I am the magistrate, the judicial, the official, and the executive officer of this 'ere camp. No, not for the world. I am the judge here, sir, and could not, could not think of it. (*Is all the time trying to get near jug and is smacking lips and spitting cotton.*) Not for the world, not for the world would I taste a drop as a beverage. The example, sir, the example in this rising young region is important. No, sir, not a drop as a beverage.

HANK. Well, then, Squire, as a medicine.

BROWN. Hey ? Hey ? As a medicine ? Yes, as a medicine. (*Grasps jug and drinks long and eagerly.*) Yes, as a medicine I will. (*Drinks again.*) But never one drop shall ever pass my lips as a beverage. (*Offers* EBE *jug ; business ad lib. of offering jug and taking back and drinking again. Meantime* ROSIE *has sat down on rocks and begun to examine them. She now discovers the gold.*)

ROSIE. (*Aside.*) Gold, gold here in seams and lines and bars ; enough to make Henry rich, rich ! And I heard the Squire speak of coming to make a deed of it. It must not be.

HANK. My Rosie, love, what are you sitting out there and apart on the rocks for ? Are you tired ?

ROSIE. Why, no, Henry, not at all.

HANK. Well, the thirty-mile dash down the Sierras might have made you so were it not that you are a part of them, my beauty. Oh, Rosie, when I remember my dissolute old life, when I first started Tally-ho over yonder mountains, and how people laughed at old Hank Monk, and how one little girl away up yonder, in a camp almost on the summit, used to sit every day as I dashed by. Well, well, they were trying old days. But the little flower by the roadside grew and grew and blossomed brighter as the sun rolled on, and one day I drew up six reins, got down, and gathered it to my heart. (*Embraces her.*)

ROSIE. And oh, Henry, how I used to love you !

HANK. Used to ? used to, my pet ? Be careful ; I am growing old, and the white snows of the Sierras are sifting through my hair. And then that handsome fellow, that gambler, who loved you so, who loves you still.

ROSIE. (*Snaps finger.*) That for him, Henry, and all his love. I am yours forevermore.

HANK. (*Embracing.*) Thank you, my pretty pet. And I'll never bother myself any more about it.

ROSIE. You need not, Henry ; I am yours to the end.

HANK. Oh, you make me so happy, pet ; and you are not tired ?

ROSIE. Not in the least.

HANK. Then the old Tally-ho song.

EBE. Yah ! we do dat togeder, away up yonder, ven she was not so—so long in ze dress.

HANK. Tally-ho forever ! (*They sing song of Tally-ho, and he snaps whip in chorus. As they conclude,* ROSIE *again examines for gold, and* EBE *gets out jug, and they all drink again. Enter* CRABTREE, *very gentlemanly, but pants torn and coat bursted.*)

CRABTREE. The Rose of the Sierras ! Mrs. Monk ! (*Lifts hat and shakes hand, etc.*)

HANK. You will—will ? (*Sign to jug.*)

CRABTREE. No.

BROWN. As a beverage, no, no. But—but as a medicine ?

CRABTREE. No, thank you. (*Aside.*) This time I have come to stay, and will need my best wits about me. They

are all drunk, all but her. Well, if I don't win this game, I'll leave the Sierras. Wife and mine are booked. Oh, Mr. Monk, I told the squire that probably we might need him to make out the deed.

BROWN. Yes, for in California the law is—is the law.

HANK. Don't hurry business. Squire, I knew a man once that was in a hurry. (*Is nearly drunk.*) It was Horace Greeley ! I'm the man, as all the world knows, that drove Horace Greeley over the Sierras, drove him with my six horses in Tally-ho. I'm the man that did it. Shall I tell you all about it ?

CRABTREE. (*Aside.*) Bah ! that old story that I have heard till I am sick of it.

HANK. Yes ; you want to hear it ? Well, Horace came to me first thing, and says he, "Colonel, I'm Horace Greeley." "Well, I," says I, "Mr. Horace Greeley, how are you ? I'm Hank Monk ;" and then we shook. And then says he, "I've got to lecture in Nevada to-night." "All right, Mr. Greeley," says I, "the mail's got to get through." Well, I tightened up the horses, took a turn around old Tally-ho to see that she was all solid in bolt, timber, and trees, and then I kind of slowlike climbed up to my box and Ebe there threw me the reins. Well, I kind of slowly threaded the ribbons through my fingers and the horses began to prick their ears and paw. But I was cool and slow, lookin' close to the horses, thinkin' of the great man I had there in my care, the great and good man that all the world loved, that I had to take whirlin' up and around them peaks—where a stone as big as an apple might land us all at the bottom of a bottomless gorge—well, I tell you I was about half prayin', slowly threadin' the ribbons, you know, and hearing' the horses rattle the bits in their teeth, when suddenly out popped a little bald white head and Horace squeaked out, "I've got to lecture to-night in Nevada, Mr. Monk !" Well, I give 'em the silk. Ten miles up, and they began to blow and smoke like furnaces. Out popped the little white head. "I've got to lecture in Nevada, to-night !" Ten miles more, and we were white with foam, as white as the snow-peaks about us, but I held 'em in, slow and steady and strong ; they tugged and struggled as if they knew all I felt ; but it was slow, so slow now. "I've

got to lecture in Nevada, to-night, Mr. Monk !" And just then I turned the tip of the summit, threw out the silk, the horses plunged down the steep hill, the axles rattled like engines, the wheels were in the air ! And then the little white head popped out and said somethin' about not being so very anxious to get to Nevada, after all. But I couldn't hear him for the clatter of hoofs and the rattle of the stage as we dashed like a cataract down the mountains. And at last out popped the little white head again and said somethin' about thinkin' I better slow up a bit, and not hurt my horses ! Slow up ? I gave 'em, every one, six inches of silk ; and then the voice in the stage, where I heard somethin' tumblin' about like a loose hunter in a gale, said, "Don't care a damn whether I get to Nevada to-night or not."

EBE. Yah, dot wor our own hosses did dat ting.

BROWN. And he did lecture that night in Nevada ?

HANK. Yes, yes. But he was tired, I tell you. And he was sore as well as tired. And he did not sit down to lecture. (*All laugh.*)

CRABTREE. Well, about that sale, Monk ? (CRABTREE *has sat on stump, taken out bowie-knife, and been whittling.*)

HANK. That's a fine bowie ; looks like the one I carry on the Tally-ho. Where did you get your knife ?

CRABTREE. Sacramento. Made by Jim Bowie, nephew of the old Colonel Bowie who made the first bowie-knife in Texas.

HANK. That's where I got mine. They're twins, ain't they ? (*They compare knives.*)

CRABTREE. That's so ; it would be hard to tell them apart, wouldn't it ?

HANK. What's this ? Here's your name on yours.

CRABTREE. Yes.

HANK. I hadn't the heart to have it done on mine. The fact is, I'm ashamed to carry the confounded thing. It's a coward's weapon, a knife is. I'm a man myself, and I prefer a man's arms any day.

CRABTREE. What do you call a man's arms ?

HANK. His hands, of course. They're the natural weapons of a gentleman. If nature intended you to stab, she'd have given you steel finger-nails a foot long. But she in-

tended you to use your fists, and so she gave you knuckles. However, it's all the style in California to carry a bowie, and it's better to be dead than out of the fashion. Ugh ! you cruel beast ; get in your shell. (*Shoves knife back in sheath.*)

CRABTREE. (*Putting up knife, and rising.*) But now about this deed. You promised to sign a deed of this mine when you got back. The squire has it there ready for you to sign, ready for you to keep your promise.

ROSIE. (*Aside.*) Promised to sign a deed of this ? Oh, no, no. Poor, generous Henry ; he promises everything, and keeps his promises, too. This shall not be done.

CRABTREE. Come, what do you say ? You keep your promises, I hope ? The money is here. (*Throws purse of coin on stump.*)

MONK. But stop a moment. I want to have a place, a bit of a home. I want to bore a hole in these mountains there, tap them for water, let the water flow out over all this barren land, plant grapes and apple trees, and sit down under my own vine and fig tree.

CRABTREE. Well, I want it for goats.

EBE. And crabtrees ; jest fit for dat.

ROSIE. Well, Mr. Crabtree, it ain't for sale.

HANK. Hello ! hello ! A little woman interferes with my business ? Pretty soon for that, ain't it, little Rosie ?

CRABTREE. He made me a promise. I have brought the money. I want him to sign as he promised, that deed, as he promised.

HANK. Did I promise ?

CRABTREE. The squire heard you.

HANK. Did I promise ?

BROWN. Legally, technically, you did. In law, the California law—legally speaking—you did not.

ROSIE. Legally, you did not. Oh, I am so glad. For Henry it is full of gold.

HANK. Full of gold, my beauty ?

ROSIE. Yes, and he knew it ; or why did he want it so ?

EBE. For sheeps, and goats, and crabtrees.

ROSIE. But you did not legally promise to sign the deed, and it shall not be signed.

BROWN. *Legally*, no ; he did not promise. *Morally*, he did.

HANK. Do you hear that, Rosie ? Oh, do you know that I promised ? Hang the law ! If I promised, I promised ; and old Hank Monk keeps his promises as other men keep their gold.

ROSIE. But you will not give this up ; it is full of gold heaps and heaps of gold.

HANK. Would you have me lie for gold ? My Rosie, Hank Monk, the old stage-driver, has carried more than twenty millions of gold out of these Sierras for the miners. They had never anything but his word of honor. And no man ever said that one grain of gold dust trusted to him went astray. No ; though this lay here a mass of gold, I would not look at it till I signed the deed and kept my word. (BROWN *has spread deed with seal on stump, and reaches pen.*) Give me the pen. It ain't fair, Crabtree, but I'll keep my promise. You will witness ? (*To others. Signs.*)

ROSIE. Henry ! Henry ! What have you done ?

HANK. I have kept my promise like a man !

CRABTREE. Well, yes ; he has kept his promise like a man.

ROSIE. He has kept his promise, has he, like a man ?

CRABTREE. Yes ; he has kept his promise like a man. (*Reaching for deed.*)

ROSIE. (*Takes bowie from* HANK'S *sheath, and as* CRABTREE *is about to take deed, hacks at outstretched fingers.*) Touch it, and I will hack them off ! (*Takes deed. To* HANK.) You have kept your promise like a true man, and I will keep this deed like a true woman ! (*Deed in bosom.*)

CURTAIN.

## ACT II.

SCENE: *Interior of California cabin. A stairway; mining implements, and a pair of long-legged miner's boots on will; windows; practical door flat; fireplace; fire; time, winter; snow; table centre.* EBE *and* NORA *discovered arranging things about room.*

EBE. (*Solus.*) I don't like dat Crabtree, he sour on me. But Hank Monk he like everybodys; he drink wiz everybodys; he so happy he make everybodys come to dis house and be happy too. (*To* NORA.) Make yourself lively about, Mrs. Offenhoffer.

NORA. I'll make it lively about for you, Mr. Offenhoffer, and do you mind that, if you speak to me loik that again, sor.

EBE. Vill you? vill you? Cool off, cool off, Mrs. Offenhoffer.

NORA. It's a brute that you are. Yes; before we were married it was Nora this and it was Nora that; and if you please, Miss Nora, before we was married, so it was, and ye sang, "Wearin' of the Grane," so you did, all to please me, before we was married.

EBE. Oh, before ve vas married; yah, dat makes de difference, Mrs. Offenhoffer; dat vas anoder time; dat vas before dis time—before ve vas married dat vas. You see, Mrs. Offenhoffer, folks vat get married can't most alvays tell; maybe it vill be a leetle heaven, and maybe a leetle—somedings else, Mrs. Offenhoffer. (*Sits.*) You hang my big boots by de fire for to make dry, Mrs. Offenhoffer; vat for you hang 'em on de vall by de vindow to take cold?

NORA. I'll hang—

EBE. You'll hang my boots by de fireplace, Mrs. Offenhoffer. You tink my big miners' boots a picture, dat you hang 'em dere by der vindow?

NORA. (*Furious. Taking down boots and hanging them over fireplace.*) Yes, a picture they are—a landscape—beautiful!

EBE. A picture?—a pretty picture.

NORA. Yes, a picture of a mountain ; they are big enough !

EBE. (*Rising, and kindly.*) Yah, dem poots is pig, Nora, but I vas a pig man.

NORA. Yes, a pig man ye are—a whole hog.

EBE. Nein, nein, none of that, Nora. I vill sit on your head some more if you do dat. I vas der boss miner here in der Hank Monk claims. I boss fifty mens, Nora, fifty big mens, Nora, and dey not so much troubles, dose fifty big mens, to manage as one leetle vomans ; but I vas der boss, I vos, so you jest cool off, Mrs. Offenhoffer.

NORA. (*Crying.*) You're the biggest brute in the mines, and I jest hope that derrick will break down and drop the biggest stone right on—

EBE. (*Springs at her very threateningly.*) On vat, Mrs. Offendoffer ? Drop dat biggest stone right on ? on ? on ?

NORA. On the ground. (*Laughs and jolly.*)

EBE. Dat is right. Now ve gets on. Vy, I feel so fine, I feel like old "Fadderland." (*Sings.*) You vill sing "Fadderland" vith me ? I did sing your "Fadderland," de "Wearin' of der Greens."

NORA. I won't.

EBE. You will, Mrs. Offenhoffer.

NORA. I won't.

EBE. I bet you all der gold in der Hank Monk's claims (*Very threateningly*) you vill. One ! two ! tree ! Sing ! (*They sing "Fatherland," and business ad lib.*)

NORA. (*Imitating him.*) How is dat for high, Mr. Offenhoffer ?

EBE. Goot, goot. I make you one goot German yet. Den I love you better as you vas one Frenchman. But vy don't Hank Monk and Rosie come in from der horses ?

NORA. Oh, sure it is because Hank loves his horses almost as much as he does my pretty Missis Rosie. And that is saying that he loves them so much that they try and make them mighty comfortable in this storm.

EBE. Yah, Nora, dere is lots of love dere. He loves his horses, dey loves him, and pretty Rosie loves everydings. Oh, so much happiness was never in one little house before. Nora, it don't take a very big house, or a high house, or a fine one to hold happiness.

NORA. Sure and that is so, Ebe. And do you know that is jest loik poets' books ? But, Ebe, the thing is to make happiness stay in a house when it comes.

EBE. Yah, dat ish so, Nora.

NORA. Well, do you know that I think if Tom Crabtree keeps coming in at that door that some day the happiness that is here will fly out of that window and never come back any more ?

EBE. Nora, you vas wise as you vas good ; and dat is sayin' you vas wise, Nora. He come too much, and he make Hank— (*Dumb show of drinking.*)

NORA. Too much. Too much. It means no good.

EBE. And dat sailor—drunk, drunk, drunk. And all der time Hank make (*Show of giving*) money, money, money, till all that the rich old claim gives up is— (*Dumb show of drinking and giving away money.*)

NORA. Poor, honest, generous old Hank Monk ! He was born with his hands as open as that. (*Both open palms and turn over as if emptying them.*) Nothing will ever stay in his hands but the reins of his horses when he sits on the box of Tally-ho.

EBE. Goot, Nora. I likes you for dat. Dat was dear old Hank Monk. Shoo !

[*Enter* HANK, ROSIE, *lantern in hand, whip brushing off snow. Hangs up whip, hands lantern to* EBE. NORA *takes wraps from* ROSA.]

NORA. You'll catch your death, Missis.

ROSIE. Oh, no. The pleasure of helping dear Henry look after the brave old horses, and then their gratitude and recognition, keeps me warm. Oh, no, Nora, I am as dry as toast. And they and Henry and all are so happy. No, no, death or trouble can never come in this little home, Nora, for many a long year—at least I hope not, I pray not, I— (*Stops and covers her face as if crying.*)

HANK. Now, my beauty, what is it ? Rosie, my pretty child, crying again ?

ROSIE. (*Hysterical.*) Why, no, I am laughing ; laughing, Henry dear.

HANK. Why, yes, so you are. But, Rosie, there's tears

on your lashes, love. And there's tears in your laughter, too.

ROSIE. Nothing of the kind, Henry. I am as merry as a lark. I am as happy and content as the dear old horses we have housed here at the very windows, safe from the storm. For I here, under your roof, with your strong arms about me, am as safe from harm as they.

HANK. Safe, safe from harm? Why, honey, what harm?

ROSIE. Nothing, nothing, Henry; no harm, nothing.

HANK. But there is something. The song has gone out of your voice of late; you are not the girl you were. My little girl that sat by the wayside and watched my strong horses climb the Sierras years ago is—is no more. Gone like a flower that fades when you gather it and take it to your heart.

ROSIE. Why, Henry, who now has tears in his lashes—tears in his voice? It is you, Henry, you. (*Laughs half sadly.*)

HENRY. Well, well, maybe it is because I am getting old and a bit gray about the temples; maybe that is why you don't seem quite so happy now as you did last year, Rosie. Yes, I am like the old horses that the stage company has retired with me here, a little old and not so supple and quick of limb.

ROSIE. Why, Henry, you are in the prime of manhood. A heart like yours is in its prime always, even down to the doors of death. For you have so much heart.

EBE. (*Aside.*) Heart? yah, dat ish it—too much. Bringin' up all dem ole stage-horses and puttin' 'em up in der house; have 'em sittin' at der table next. Might better sell 'em for soap. He's lookin' pretty sad, though. Guess I must pull him up. (*Business of getting demijohn as before.*)

HANK. Well, it's not a crime to have heart. (*Drinks unseen by* ROSIE.) And I tell you, Rosie, I could not possibly have been happy even with you to think that these old horses that drew Tally-ho over the Sierras with me on the box so many years were now turned out to die or shift for themselves in old age. No, they are my pensioners now, all here (*To window and calls names of horses*), safe forever

from the storm. And though it takes every dollar that the old claim gives us, Ebe, they must and shall be sheltered to the end as safely as I am sheltered.

EBE. (*Aside.*) Dat is beezness. Heart beezness. No head in dat, I bet your life.

HANK. And, Ebe, if—well, if anything happens. I mean, Rosie, that when Hank Monk is on the down grade and can't reach the brake—

ROSIE. Henry ! Henry !

EBE. Now you have her all broked up. Vat fo' you do dose tings ?

HANK. Why, look at that ! She is laughing again like a girl. You are like a summer storm in the Sierras to-night, pet ; sunshine and cloud all woven in one. You are an April morning, Rosie, to-night. (*Arms about her.*)

ROSIE. And you are the full summer day, Henry.

HANK. A late summer, love. But do you remember reading me from that book I brought you the other day here, that in Italy they call the month of April the woman's month ?

ROSIE. Yes, I remember. And it is because she sometimes weeps so and is so changeful sometimes. Oh, Henry, love, I have something to tell you.

HANK. Something to tell me ? A secret ? (*Knock at door.*)

ROSIE. Yes, but not now. Some one is coming.

HANK. (*Aside.*) A secret from me ? This is bad, bad. Come in. (*Enter* CRABTREE, SAILOR BILL, SQUIRE BROWN, *and miners. Miners are in miners' dress, carry lanterns, and wear long boots.*) Ah, gentlemen, welcome.

ROSIE. Welcome, all.

CRABTREE. (*Cordial hand to* ROSIE.) A lot of us, eh ? Well, you see (*Brushing off snow*), I met the Squire right out here, and as we saw Ebe's night watch of hounds coming into your cabin, and as the Squire here was a little wet, outside (EBE *gets jug*)—the Squire never takes anything inside except as a medicine—why, we thought we, too, would drop in and ask about the horses. Eh, Squire ? (SQUIRE *assents and spitting cotton.*)

HANK. You are as welcome as they are safe and sound.

Why, Tom, you can almost see their noses there. They neigh and nicker to me in the morning, and—well, we talk of old times together before I fairly get out of bed, and (*gives hand*) I thank you for asking about 'em. It's strange, Crabtree, that for all that little trouble we had you have a heart.

CRABTREE. (*Aside.*) A heart? Yes, for his wife. And I'll have her, too, before the snow that is falling melts away. (*To* HANK.) Yes, take care of the horses. (*To* ROSIE.) But I haven't heard you singing as of late? Sick? Sad?

EBE. Nora, I bet you I break dat man's back. I bet your life he fall in a tunnel and broke his nose for a cent. Dat spoil his beauty, Nora.

HANK. Oh, no, Rosie is well, quite well. You will sing, Rosie?

ROSIE. For these honest miners? Yes.

EBE. A song for der miners, Nora. She don't sing for dat feller; I bet your life she don't.

ROSIE. And you will sing with me?

ALL. Yes, yes, Rosie. Yes.

ROSIE. Why then let's sing the old miners' song, "The Days of '49."

ALL. Forty-nine! Forty-nine! The days of Forty-nine! (*All sing* '49.)

EBE. (*At end of song catches up jug and passes around.*) Bravo! Bravo! Bravo! Here, Nora, a tin cup. A quart cup for der Squire—as a medicine.

NORA. (*To* SQUIRE.) As a medicine, you know. (*All drink and drink. Show of merriment and delight.*)

EBE. Vell, men, ve must be gone for der tunnel. Dem udder fellers in der tunnel, dey want der nip too. All ready?

ALL. Ready, ready, ready. (*Men bow and file out.*)

EBE. Goot-py, my pretty French Nora. I put der men to work and I come back. (*To* SAILOR BILL.) You go wit me? (BILL *shakes head solemnly.* EBE *picks up jug.*) You go wit me? (*Business of eager to follow, but first speaks to* CRABTREE *hurriedly, making signs to* ROSIE, *who has been by side of and talking with* CRABTREE. *Exit all.*)

HANK. (*Aside.*) Why, that is strange. How excited Rosie is, too.

ROSIE. (*To* CRABTREE.) No, no. Go, I don't want you to stay. I don't want to see you.

CRABTREE. No ? I understand ; it is because he is watching us. I will go, but come back, remember.

NORA. (*To* SQUIRE.) The biverage is gone, and good-night. (*Exit.* CRABTREE, *after cold good-night to* HANK, *exit with* SQUIRE BROWN.)

ROSIE. Oh, I am so glad he is gone, Henry, and I hope, I pray he will never come back any more.

HANK. Why Rosie, Rosie pet, what can it be that is the matter with you ?

ROSIE. I have something to tell you, Henry.

HANK. Something to tell me. Well, pet, tell it, tell it right out, open and frank as your sweet face.

ROSIE. No, no, it's sacred ; a secret.

HANK. A secret ? A sacred secret ?

ROSIE. Oh, Henry. Yes a secret.

HANK. A secret ? A secret from me, Rosie ? Tell me ; tell it to me and tell me now.

ROSIE. And you are angry ?

HANK. I would have no secrets hidden in your heart. There is not room enough in your heart for secrets and for me, Rosie. Nay, men have been whispering strange things to me, and this is not all news. That door of mine has had no lock nor key in the whole year of our married life. Men have come and been welcome, and I showed you to all as the purest and the most priceless bit of gold that ever was found in these Sierras. But an honest old sailor, one who has ploughed the same seas that I sailed when a lad, has told me much. Crabtree has despoiled my home.

ROSIE, Henry, I will not hear this. (*Turns, ascending stairs, turns about on stairs, and with uplifted hand.*) I have a secret. It is mine and His. (*Points up. Exit up stairs.*)

HANK. Oh, this is terrible, terrible, terrible. What can it all mean ?

NORA. (*Following up stairs.*) What does it mane ? It

manes that a man is a fool, and that yer the biggest fool of the lot. That's what it manes. (*Snaps fingers and exit.*)

HANK. (*Solus.*) Well, I've seen through the alkali dust on the stage-road when it was thick as smoke. But I can't see through this. (*Meditatively.*) A man's a fool, and I'm the biggest fool of the lot. Well, it's nothing very serious if it's only the fact that I am a fool. Old Hank Monk never could see much but his leaders, the straight road ahead, climbing up, up, up against God's stars that tip the peaks of the Sierras. (*Meantime has taken pipe and tobacco from mantel and is cutting tobacco with bowie-knife as he talks.*) But why did she refuse to answer and run away? Oh, pshaw! She won't stay away from me now; she can't. She will come and tell me what it is, I know.

ROSIE. (*Descending stairs.*) Henry, all alone?

HANK. (*Lays knife on table.*) Always alone when you are not here, Rosie.

ROSIE. You are so good to me. But now, Henry, I have something to ask you. Do not let that man come here.

HANK. My pet, virtue needs no iron bars about it. It is like sunlight; you need not fence it in, you cannot drive it out. But why do you say this?

ROSIE. Oh, I could kill that man. (*She stands by table and hand resolutely clutches knife.*) I could murder him!

HANK. Rosie, my wife, these words are not worthy of you. If he deserves death, he shall die. If you say for me to murder him, it shall be done to-night—now. But you shut up secrets in your heart; and yet here, in your husband's presence, let the name of murder pass your lips. What does it all mean?

ROSIE. Now you are angry again. It is nothing, nothing much. But these men have robbed you of all your money; they are now going to rob me of your love and your trust. And, oh, I feel so strangely now, so in need of your help and love, and strong arms around me.

HANK. (*Sits.*) Rosie come here and sit down. Come. The old baby shyness is getting about you again. You are not afraid to sit here? You have done nothing that you are ashamed of?

ROSIE. (*After long hesitating.*) I will sit at your feet.

HANK. At my feet, Rosie ? You sha'n't do that.

ROSIE. Let me sit here, for I have something to tell you. And I seem so timid, so afraid.

HANK. You are frightened and nervous. Why, you are all a-tremble, my wife. (*Draws to his side.*)

ROSIE. Henry, I have something to tell you. It will please you, dearest, I hope. No, no ; it is nothing about that sailor or that other man, or anybody that has walked the earth, or seen the light of day.

HANK. Rosie, my darling, you're talking awful queer.

ROSIE. (*Takes book from table.*) Do you remember the pretty story I read you from this book last summer, under the trees, about the poor people of London ?

HANK. Let me see. Yes, there was Mrs. Boffin and Mr. Wegg, who was always dropping into poetry. Why, Rosie, how you tremble ! I am afraid you are not as happy as I am. Do you know I sometimes think I am too selfish, that I ought not to be so happy ? And now, Rosie, if it's a new bonnet or a new dress, I'll get 'em, Rosie, if I have to sell a horse.

ROSIE. No, no, Henry, it's not that. And then you are not selfish, and I am not unhappy. Oh, no, Henry, I am happy, so happy. And maybe it is this that makes me so —so— (*Hides face.*)

HANK. What, Rosie ? And what about the one-legged man, that was always dropping into poetry ? Oh, but he was no poet, Rosie. He should have loved the Sierras and this open air, and not the dirt and dust-heaps and carts. Do you know, Rosie, Bobby Burns would have loved all this about us here. The trees I planted, the horses there, the great, deep cañons yonder.

ROSIE. But there was another name in the story—Bella ! Bella and Mr. Rokesmith. Do you remember them ?

HANK. Yes, yes ; I think I do. Bella that had a beautiful ankle. Is it about her, Rosie ?

ROSIE. No, no, Henry. Don't you remember where, after they are married, John draws Bella to him, as you have drawn me, and she sits at his feet as I sit here, and hides her head on his breast as I do here. And do you remember how she timidly tells him that—that—that a ship from some

strange land is—is coming to them from over the unknown seas ?

HANK. Yes, yes, I—I do.

ROSIE. Well, Henry, a ship like that is coming to you and —me. (*Hides face, and a long silence.*)

HANK. (*Looks straight at the fire over her bowed head and whistles.*) Little mother, kiss me ! (*Then kissing her proudly, jumps up, dances about, catches up a jug, drinks, hugs it, nurses it and dances about, singing "Baby Mine."* ROSIE, *hiding face, runs up-stairs, stops, looks back.*) Happy ? the happiest man in the universe. (*Is about to drink, she gently protests.*) Yes, yes, I know what you would say, Rosie. I will be sober. There ! (*Throws it aside.*) I will never drink again, so help me Heaven ! (ROSIE, *with sign of gratitude, exit.*) Now let any man hint one word against Rosie. Hank Monk, if you, even you, old fellow, dare even hint one bit of doubt or suspicion, why, I will murder you ! Happy old fellow ! The proudest and the happiest man in these Sierras. (*Taps heart, comes to window and calls horses.*) I wish I could tell you. I wish you could understand and be glad, proud, and happy as I. Why, I'll come out to you. Yes, I will come right out among you, and hug your hairy old necks, and make you be glad with me.

[*Exit. Enter* CRABTREE *and* SAILOR BILL.]

CRABTREE. (*Looks about cautiously.*) He is not here. That is something to start with at least. Fortune favors the brave. He out of the house, and she in tears. With a man out of the house, and a woman in tears—that's all I ask to insure victory.

BILL. (*Sits doggedly at table.*) Well, what did you bring me here for ? Don't see nothin' to drink ; don't want nothin' to eat. And now what do you want me to do ? And what did you take up that plank in the bridge for ? It's a dark night, and it ain't safe.

CRABTREE. Not safe for anybody that would try to run across to where the miners have opened the new tunnel, eh ?

BILL. The cussed canyon is a mile deep ; only a cat's jump across, but mighty deep, mighty deep.

CRABTREE. If you were to go across there and give the cry of alarm ; a call for help, as if the tunnel had caved in ?

BILL. Yes, yes, governor ?

CRABTREE. And I tried to get there to help Hank Monk's miners.

BILL. Yes, yes, governor ?

CRABTREE. Why, I would fall, and there wouldn't be a bone of me left.

BILL. Oh, oh, my eyes ! Do you want to fall ?

CRABTREE. Well, if some other fellow fell there, this particularly dark night of snow and storm, Bill, it would be about all the same to you, old pard, eh ?

BILL. (*A long whistle.*) Well, now, if you give the signal yourself, it would be about the same to you, old pard, eh ?

CRABTREE. Cursed old fool. I would be suspected. People always suspect smart men. You are a fool. No one would accuse you. And then I want to be here to comfort her when—

BILL. (*Springing up.*) Here ? Here ? And it is to be the brave old Hank Monk. Why, we ploughed the same seas. I'll tell all ! all ! all !

CRABTREE. (*Drawing bowie.*) Will you shut up ?

BILL. (*Grasping knife from table, and desperate show of fight.*) No ! I will not shut up till I shut you up.

CRABTREE. (*Meekly and kindly, lowers knife.*) Come, come. Sit down there. Sit down. We must not quarrel. (BILL *sits and half turns back.*)

BILL. Don't want to quarrel with you, Mr. Crabtree. But don't think of trappin' a man as if he was a beast—a b'ar. No, no, don't strike a man in the dark ; an old gray-headed man who has been on the sea. (*All this time* CRABTREE *is making ready to strike in the back.*) No ; give all men a show. We don't live long or have much fun, none of us. Give every man a show. (CRABTREE *strikes and* BILL *cries out and falls dead on table, throwing knife up stage.*)

CRABTREE. Dead ! dead, and by my hand ! Well, the old fool deserved it, and it is safest as it is. This knife ! I must hide it. But where ? There is blood on it. I hear some one coming. I must hide the knife, and hide myself too. (*Hides knife in boots hanging over fireplace, and*

*creeps toward door as* ROSIE *descends stairs, holding candle over head, followed by* NORA.)

ROSIE. I thought I heard a cry for help. It must have been nothing. I don't know what can be the matter, I am all the time starting and trembling, and hearing strange sounds. I was sure I heard some one cry out. Where is Henry? (*Descends, stops.*) Why, what is this? Henry's knife? (*Picks up knife and advances to table.*) This man here too, and drunk? Why will Henry have these creatures here? They will ruin him and me too. Mr! Mr! Mr! (*Business of turning dead man's face, and holds down candle; finds him dead, and screams as she falls back toward door. Miners come pouring in with lights, and* CRABTREE *steps out.*)

ROSIE. (*Still holding knife; to people.*) The man is dead.

CRABTREE. Dead! My friend dead! Who did this thing? Who killed the man, I say? (*Enter* HANK. *Looks on in amazement.* ROSIE *steps out with knife, helpless and dazed. All look at her.*) There! There is the assassin. See the knife is still in her hand. (*To* SQUIRE.) You are an officer. Arrest that woman. She has killed my friend.

BROWN. She? she killed him? You lie.

EBE. And I bet your life he lie. (*To* NORA.) But she did, Nora, and served him right.

CRABTREE. Arrest her, I say. She has killed this man.

HANK. (*Aside.*) Oh! She did say to me, "I could murder him." Oh! the little ship will never come to land.

CRABTREE. That woman killed my friend.

NORA. She did not kill him. (ROSIE, *silent, fixed, and statue-like, does not understand.*)

CRABTREE. She did kill him, I say. I saw her step back from the table as I entered. (SQUIRE *moves forward.*)

HANK. Stand back from my wife. Touch her if you dare.

CRABTREE. But she killed that man.

HANK. She did not kill that man.

CRABTREE. Then who did?

HANK. (*Dashes forward.*) I killed that man. (ROSIE *falls in arms.*)

CURTAIN.

## ACT III.

SCENE : *Same as in Act II.*—SQUIRE BROWN *discovered, rather loudly dressed, spectacles on, looking over papers at table.*

BROWN. Clear case against him, poor fellow, clear case. In fact the one main witness against Hank Monk is a man that the jury must believe. And that is Hank Monk himself. If he only could have kept his mouth shut, might have made it appear to the jury that the man stabbed himself. True, men don't go around stabbin' themselves in the back with bowie-knives as a rule—as a rule that is very exceptional. But then there are lawyers who, for a consideration, will undertake to prove it ; and there are jurors who, for a consideration, would be willin' to believe that a man could and would stab himself in the back with another man's bowie-knife. But then Hank Monk has no money, never would save a cent ; and how can you persuade any honest man in this world to believe a man is not guilty when you have not a dollar to persuade with ? Oh, if he had only kept his mouth shut ! Men talk too much, men talk too much, altogether too much. (*Enter* NORA. *Stops and listens.*) Men talk too much, women talk too much, everybody talks too much. (*Lays down papers, rocks back in chair, and brushes up and pulls down vest.*) He's got to die. And then the widder ! Ah, the widder ! She will have to be comforted. I will try my best to comfort Hank Monk's widder. Poor thing, poor thing. It is the least I can do for a dear old friend who will have to be hung. They have not found him guilty of murder yet. But the jury will ; yes, they will, and in less than an hour too. I heard the evidence and they must bring him in guilty. So I came early to comfort the widder. Oh, if he had only kept his mouth shut I might have been saved this sad but not entirely unpleasant duty. But he couldn't keep his mouth shut. Men talk too much.

NORA. I think it very loikely they do, Squire Brown.

BROWN. Nora ! Is it you Nora, my dear ?

NORA. Well, I should say so. And its queer comfort you mane to bring to Rosie with such talk as that men talk too much, Squire Brown.

BROWN. Well, Nora, I come to offer consolation to the affiicted widder that is to be, with all my heart.

NORA. Well, now, it's consolation to yourself I am thinking that you mane, wid your striped vest and fine boots; and I think you can spare yourself the trouble. Mr. Crabtree has been ahead of ye.

BROWN. Been ahead of me? Crabtree ahead of Squire Brown?

NORA. Well, he's been a hangin' about the door. But divil a bit would I let him in. Listen. I tell ye, Squire, yer an officer of the law, ar'n't ye?

BROWN. (*Pompously.*) Well, I should radiate. I am an officer of the law, of the California law; and the California law, Nora, is—is—is law.

NORA. Well, I am glad to hear that. Now listen, Squire Brown. (*Looks about and approaches close.*) I think that Crabtree wants to stale somethin'.

BROWN. Crabtree steal something?

NORA. Crabtree stale somethin', Squire Brown.

BROWN. Why, what do you mean?

NORA. Why, I mane that night after night he came to that door while I was a-waitin' on poor sick Missis Rosie as she lay here dyin' almost of a faver, and once when he thought I was aslape he slipped in on tiptoe. Yes, and he almost got his hand in Mr. Offenhoffer's boots a-hangin' there. But I've got a lock and a bolt on the door now, Squire Brown. An' only that I had my back turned just now for a second to see one of poor master's horses that seemed to be a moanin' for him, ye wouldn't a got in here yourself, Squire Brown.

BROWN. Ah, this must be looked into, as the man said when he fell in the well. The law of California, Nora, is—is—is the law. (*Aside.*) He's goin' to be a dangerous rival of mine for the widder. I must fix this feller, Tom Crabtree. For in California widders are—are widders.

[*Enter* EBE *in great grief and meekness.*]

EBE. Oh, Nora, Nora, I'm all broke in two at last.

NORA. Well, yer long enough and ugly enough to break into a good many times, Mr. Offenhoffer.

EBE. Ah, Nora, that's just like a vomans. Ven you see me down, jump on to me; sit on my het. Yes, I'm all gone in two since poor Mr. Hank Monk did dat tings, all gone in two; and yer have it all your own vay, shust like it used to vas before ve got married.

NORA. Yes, when I made yer kape in yer place; made yer sing "Wearin' of the Grane" and kape Saint Patrick's day.

EBE. Saint Whatrick's days, Nora?

NORA. Saint Patrick's day, ye spalpeen. An' where's the shamrock I made ye wear in yer hat on this day of the thrial, for good fortune to poor Mr. Hank Monk? Where is it, I say? Produce it, and don't stand there on one foot a shakin' like that. Where is it, I say?

EBE. There it is, Nora, what little there is left of it. (*Produces big cabbage-leaf from inside of hat.*)

NORA. A cabbage-leaf! A sour kraut cabbage-leaf! ye sassage and sour kraut Dutchman ye! (*About to assault him.*)

BROWN. Come, come, I am a magistrate of the law of California, and the law of California is—is law. But tell me, Mr. Ebenezer Offenhoffer, how goes the trial?

EBE. It don't go at all. It just sit still, and he sit still and say, "I did kill him;" dat's all, dat's all. And she, Rosie, sit by him, back a little, mit her pretty face hidden away like, and a moanin' and a moanin'.

BROWN. Oh, be comforted, California widder. And we must, I must do all I can to comfort her when she comes to this desolate hearth. Yes, the widders must be comforted, so says the Bible. And do you know, in California, my young friends, it is an old and honored custom that when a man kills a man he generally goes to the generous expense of burying him? Yes, and not only that, my young friends, he not only must bury the man he kills, but he must not unfrequently also marry the widow!

NORA. Marry the widow? Have you any row on hand, any hard falin's with any man, Ebenezer?

EBE. Marry the widder?

BROWN. Yes, if you kill a man in California, you must not only bury him, but marry the widow.

EBE. (*Meditatively.*) Vell, Nora, I don't know vhich get der vorst of dat, der man vat get killed or der man vat have to marry der vidder, Nora. (*A song of a sentimental kind. Enter* CRABTREE, *faultlessly dressed, flower in button-hole, and flowers in hand.*)

CRABTREE. Ah, good morning, Squire.

BROWN. (*Aside.*) My rival, hang him ! No, it's the other man they are going to hang. Oh, if they don't hang him there is a waste of money on my fine clothes ; and on his too. Phew ! But he is dressed ; although not quite up to Squire Brown. Not quite up to Squire Brown I guess, with all his flowers.

CRABTREE. Well, you can give these to your mistress when she returns from the Court-House. (NORA *snatches flowers. Business of watching him very closely as he saunters about stage and approaches boots, still hanging near fireplace, and getting between.*)

BROWN. And how goes the trial, Mr. Crabtree ? I seed you there this morning ; juss come from the Court-House, didn't you ?

CRABTREE. Bad enough, bad enough. (*Still trying to get near boots, is about to put hand in and get knife. This business must be worked up and kept up at intervals, till near the end.*) Yes, I just came down from the Court-House. The jury is out now ; got instructions from the Court that fixes him dead. No, I mean that there is no possible escape for our poor friend, Squire. And as I could not bear to stay and see him sentenced, I came on down here to—to— (*Trying to get knife, and* EBE *walks between, turns him around down stage.*) As I was saying, Squire, I could not bear to see the poor fellow sentenced ; so I came on down here to—(*Again attempts knife*) to comfort the widow.

BROWN. Yes, I'm down here for that purpose myself.

CRABTREE. I feel very unhappy about it all.

BROWN. Yes, you look unhappy. You look deuced unhappy. Why don't you sit down like a gentleman (*Thumbs in vest and pompous*) and keep cool, and be comfortable ? Why, you act like as if you had a nest of yellow-jackets up your pantaloons' leg.

CRABTREE. It's my—my sympathy.

EBE. (*Again interfering and looking in his face.*) Yer vat? (CRABTREE *moves feet uneasily.*) Do your fine poots hurt your feet, Mr. Crabtree?

CRABTREE. They do.

EBE. Vell, vy you don't vear somethin' pigger? Like dat. Dose landscape poots?

NORA. Real estate boots.

EBE. Stop your insinervations about my understanding; dat's my landscape, Mr. Crabtree. My picture dey got a hole der pottoms, so I hangs dem up.

BROWN. Then they are no longer useful; but very ornamental.

EBE. Yaw, very on-der-mantelpiece.

CRABTREE. They are of no value then! Holes in them, you say? Let me take them then and go—go put them on in place of these I—I—am suffering—

EBE. Vell, you look seek.

NORA. Take 'em. Ye can have the bastely things. He made me hang 'em there. Yis, when he had his way and Mr. Monk was here to help him have his way. But now he has his way no more. Take the bastely, hideous things away. He made me kape 'em there jest for his maneness. Take 'em an put 'em on and make a fright of yerself by the time Rosie comes, and that's the harm I wish you, Mr. Crabtree. (*About to take boots when* EBE *keeps going between.* CRABTREE *in despair.*)

EBE. Who dare dose pair of boot dishplace
Must meet Bombastus face to face!
Shoo! My poor Mister and Missis.

[*Enter* HANK *and* ROSIE, *broken down with trouble.* HANK *is in irons, followed by Officer.*]

NORA. My poor Missis! My poor young Missis! Here's some flowers for ye, Missis Rosie.

ROSIE. Oh, how kind in you, Nora. Pretty innocent roses!

HANK. Yes, innocent roses. Poems of the Sierras, Rosie. It is a sweet and pretty thought of the poor Irish girl, Rosie, to bring you these roses gathered by her thoughtful hand now

at this last fatal hour when I am to die. (ROSIE *turns away in tears.*)

NORA. Oh, please sor I—I—I'm so ashamed that I did not gather them ; that I did not bring them, sor ; but I did not.

EBE. (*Aside.*) No we deed not ; too dam stupid to tink of a fine ting like dat.

HANK. You did not gather them, Nora ? Then who did ?

NORA. He—he did there, Crabtree.

CRABTREE. (*Exultant.*) She takes my flowers ; she holds them in her hand ; she keeps them ; she is mine, mine, mine at last.

HANK. (*Aside.*) My God ! Then they have not lied to me. You hear that, Rosie ? He, Crabtree, brought them. (ROSIE *has not spoken, but is listless, dazed, and does not seem to hear or understand.*) Will she put them down ? Oh, she will drop them as she would fire. No, she does not, but holds her head in silence and in shame. Well, well, I must bear it. But, oh, it is hard, hard, hard.

BROWN. (*Who has spoken dumbshow with Sheriff.*) I see ; sentenced to die, but wanted to come once more to see his horses and his little home.

CRABTREE. (*Aside.*) Sentenced to die. All things are his who knows how to wait. Like a ripe apple, she must fall to my feet all in good time.

HANK. I want, I want to see my horses and say good-by, and go, and go, soon, soon, very soon from this all.

EBE. (*Crying.*) Dere is somedings in my eye ; der dom chimney smoke so.

NORA. Missis, Missis Rosie, you don't seem quite yourself, Missis Rosie.

ROSIE. Oh, Nora, dear, is it you ? Where am I ? What has happened ? Oh, I remember it all now !

HANK. Rosie, I haven't much time. They want me. You see the Sheriff is impatient. It was kind of him to let me look in once more. And he is going to take me out to see my horses here. Yes, when he gets me away from the people where they won't see him, Rosie, out in the stable, he will unchain one hand, yes, so that I can put my arm

around my horses' necks, and hug 'em and pet 'em and talk to 'em as I used to up in the snow under the pines and peaks of the Sierras with Tally-ho.

ROSIE. My husband, oh, my love. Let me take your hand. Let me hold it in mine and go with you, be by your side to the end. I know you did it all for me.

HANK. Rosie!

ROSIE. No, no, do not take yonr hand away like that. For were it ten times as red with blood as it now is I would still cling to you.

HANK. Ten times as red with blood! Rosie, speak it low, and hold your head when you speak so. I will save you. Fear nothing for my devotion to the end of all this miserable business. But when you took that man's life you took mine also.

ROSIE. What do you mean? I do not understand. Oh, what do you mean?

HANK. Nothin'! Nothin'! I killed that man, and yet, Rosie, don't—don't, when I am dead and the boys come to talk to you, the boys that I've been with in the snow on the mountain-top, the boys who rode with me many a time on Tally-ho, the boys whose gold I carried out from the mines in millions—well, Rosie, don't quite let 'em believe that I stabbed the man in the back. It hurts me here to think that they will say that old Hank Monk, who braved a thousand dangers with them, should stab a man in the back.

ROSIE. But he deserved it.

HANK. Shoo! Shoo! That's what you said that night. And see what came of it; see what came of it. No, don't take my hand. (*Aside.*) She holds his flowers in her hand all the time and I can't let her touch me, and I won't, I won't, I won't!

ROSIE. Henry, forgive me, forgive me. I know you did what you did that night for me and—

HANK. (*Firmly.*) Rosie, I don't mean to say nothin', I have taken all on my shoulders and I will bear it to the grave. Don't you fear for that. But for you to talk to me so when I am going so soon for aye to my death. Oh, say all that to them, to others, when I am gone and in my grave, shut in from the light and the sweet breath of heaven. But

here, under my own roof, by my own hearthstone, which you stood by and saw me plant with these hands; here, face to face, soul to soul for the last time we shall meet this side the dark river of death, let us be truthful. I bear it all for you and will not murmur.

ROSIE. But, oh, why were you so rash, so angry, Henry?

HANK. It begins to stir my blood. And now, by Heaven, were it not that you are as you are, were it not that God has kissed you and made you now something even more sacred and holy than woman, by Heaven, I would not bear it, but bring you both face to face with the law, and let you stand chained together as I stand chained now.

CRABTREE. (*Aside.*) Me to the law! Can he suspect me too?

ROSIE. Oh, Henry, you will kill me.

HANK. You whom I had loved so! What secret had you and he—what did he know of you two that you should kill him?

CRABTREE. What's that? You accuse her?

HANK. Stand back, man; stand back from her. Don't dare to accuse her now. I killed him with these two hands and on my head falls the punishment alone. Come. (*To officers.*) I am ready now. (*Going.*)

ROSIE. (*Reaching hands.*) Henry, my husband! Here's my hand.

HANK. Don't reach your hands to me. I leave all—all. (ROSIE *tries to come to him, falls.*) See there. There she lies like dead. Take her up, for you brought her low. Good-by all, good-by. (*Going.* CRABTREE *attempts to assist her.*)

EBE. No you don't; not for Joseph or all his bredern. Don't you want dat poots, Mr. Crabtree? I bet your life you want dose poots. Jaw, Mr. Crabtree, jaw!

CRABTREE. Curse him! What can he mean? If I could only get at that knife. Of course I will take the boots, Ebe.

NORA. Yes, take 'em and git. But ye sha'n't touch my lady, for she don't want ye to.

CRABTREE. Well, she holds on to my flowers as if she did.

ROSIE. *Your* flowers? Why, I'd rather hold a nest of scorpions in my hand. (*Throws flowers.* HANK *half turns to come back.*)

NORA. Now don't ye see ye better take your real estate and git? Your pretty boots. He's been waiting to get hold of 'em for a whole month, yer honor.

CRABTREE. Hang the boots!

EBE. Vell, dey're already hung, an' dat's vat make my Nora so mad, for I make her hang 'em.

NORA. Yis, judge, yer know, he's been a pinin' an' a dyin' for 'em. An' here they are. (*Snatches down boots and hands to* CRABTREE, *who takes them hurriedly and starts to go.*)

BROWN. What's yer hurry? Hold on, there's been too much talk about them 'ere boots. And—and under the laws or California this must be looked into, as the man said when he fell into the well. (*Takes boots, shakes, rattles them, and pours out bowie-knife.*)

ALL. A bowie!

BROWN. Mr. Offenhoffer, there's your bowie-knife.

EBE. Don't vant it; don't touch 'em. I licks my Nora witout a bowie-knife pretty directly, for take down dem poots.

BROWN. Is it yours, Mr. Crabtree? You had a beautiful one, and—and I have not seen it since the night of the murder. Is it yours?

CRABTREE. No, no; I never saw it. I'm going, I'm sick of this.

EBE. Vell, you maybe might git sick before you git done mit it, for makin' my Nora take down dem ole poots.

BROWN. Hold on. (*Takes up knife.*) Oh, you vicious viper, you are black with blood; you have been biting somebody. (*Looks and reads.*) Hold! Thomas Crabtree! It's your property.

CRABTREE. No, no. (*Going.*)

BROWN. It is your property, and you are my prisoner!

EBE. And you is vat kill dat Bill mit dat?

BROWN. (*Holding up point of knife to* CRABTREE.) See the pint?

NORA. There'll be a mob here in about a minute and— (*Sign of hanging.* EBE *does all this in pantomime.*)

CRABTREE. No, no, not that, not that ! Give me the law, Squire, the law, and I will confess all.

BROWN. The California law is—is—well, you shall have it. (*Sheriff takes off chains.*)

ROSIE. Henry, my husband ! free and guiltless !

HANK. Rosie, my wife, the pure white Rose of the Sierras. And now we will go and tell the horses all about it, about the little ship too, that is coming from the unknown seas ; Bonaparte, High-stepper, Sam, and Ginger. And we will take them out, hitch them up, and if it please you (*To audience*), we will have many a happy ride together yet on old Tally-ho.

CURTAIN.